

**TO:** Board of Directors  
**FROM:** Eric Adams, Planning, Parks & Facilities Director  
**DATE:** July 5, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area

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## **TOPIC**

At its June 14, 2017, meeting, the Board of Directors received multiple public comments regarding equestrian use at Georgia Pacific Natural Area (Attachment I). Toward the conclusion of this meeting, the President of the Board recommended that Willamalane “find a way to make sure equestrian access was allowed on the trails.” This memo documents staff’s efforts to date in response to this recommendation.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Relevant Background Information

A majority, if not all, of the public testimony presented at the June 14, 2017, Board of Directors meeting focused on allowing equestrian access to Georgia Pacific Natural Area from Pacific Equestrian Center (Attachment II). This private business provides boarding, training, and riding lessons for its customers, as described on the business’ website (<https://pacificquestrian.net/>). Information presented on the website notes that the center is adjacent to 100 acres of publicly owned land, and that “beginner rider” camps are taken on trail rides. Based on field observations and a review of aerial imagery, Pacific Equestrian Center appears to be the only property within the immediate vicinity of Georgia Pacific Natural Area where horses are kept, and is the only adjacent property from which equestrians are gaining access to the natural area.

Georgia Pacific Natural Area is jointly owned by Willamalane Park and Recreation District, the City of Springfield, and the Springfield Utility Board (“public agencies”). Prior to being acquired by these agencies, the property was owned by a private company, Georgia Pacific. An informal network of trails was established on the property prior to or during Georgia Pacific’s ownership, and these trails were apparently used on a regular basis by clients of the equestrian center for horseback riding. Access to Georgia Pacific Natural Area from the equestrian center requires passing through another property that is solely owned by the City of Springfield, as well as crossing the Mill Race, which is a “water quality limited watercourse” regulated by the City of Springfield (Attachment II).

Following acquisition of the property in 1994 by the public agencies, Willamalane constructed portions of the multi-use, hard surfaced Middle Fork Path and the Mill Race Path through

Georgia Pacific Natural Area. None of the improvements completed as part of these projects were intentionally designed to facilitate continued equestrian use of the property. In fact, it is staff's understanding that discussions with the equestrian center prior to construction of the Mill Race Path specifically highlighted the expectation that horses should not be allowed to use or cross either of the multi-use paths due to concerns over compatibility with pedestrians, cyclists, and people who might choose to walk their dogs along the paths.

During the summer of 2017, staff received complaints from users of the Mill Race and Middle Fork paths that horse manure had been found along them on several occasions. A letter was sent to Pacific Equestrian Center informing the business owner that horses were prohibited from using Georgia Pacific Natural Area, as is specified in Ordinance 100<sup>1</sup> for all parks owned or managed by Willamalane. The letter prompted public testimony on this matter at the June 14, 2017, meeting of the Board of Directors.

### Efforts to Date

Staff reached out to the Pacific Equestrian Center following the June 14, 2017, Board meeting and held an initial meeting with the business owner on September 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss multiple regulatory and liability factors raised by the public agencies (Attachment III). A follow-up meeting was held on December 27<sup>th</sup> (Attachment IV-14), at which the need to engage with the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Soil & Water Conservation Service (SWCS) to assess water quality impacts, as well as the possibility of Pacific Equestrian Center allowing public access through its property for equestrian use at Georgia Pacific Natural Area were further discussed. Action items identified at this meeting included Willamalane staff scheduling a site visit with SWCS to review options for limiting potential water quality impacts to the Mill Race, and the equestrian center researching potential insurance policies that would provide liability coverage sufficient to enable public access through its property.

Staff met with a SWCS representative on January 24, 2017, and toured the natural area; specifically, the location where equestrians are crossing the Mill Race to access the natural area. Given the width of the crossing, seasonal variation in flow, and gradually sloped banks on each side of the crossing, it was determined that armoring it with rock could sufficiently resolve water quality impacts, by limiting the potential for horses to stir-up sediments along the bottom of the channel and on either bank when entering and exiting the water. This information was shared with appropriate City of Springfield staff, who raised concerns about the continued potential for introduction of fecal bacteria as a result of horses crossing through the water. The possibility for an unpredictable increase of equestrian use were public access to be allowed contributed to these concerns. City staff suggested that a bridge would be the preferred solution for resolving this issue.

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<sup>1</sup> Ord. 100, Sec. 1.10(9). "Animals. No horses or other pack/riding animals are allowed in any District Park, except in designated areas or in conjunction with District-sponsored or sanctioned activities. All pets must be on a leash except in designated areas. Pet owners are responsible for the immediate removal of animal solid waste." Willamalane Park and Recreation District – Park and Facility Rules; <https://www.willamalane.org/Documents/District%20Info/Our%20Team/Contact%20Us/Park-and-Facility-Rules-Ordinance-100.pdf>).

After several attempts to schedule another follow-up meeting, staff eventually met with representatives from the equestrian center on April 16, 2017 (Attachment IV-9). Staff shared information about options for improving the crossing, as well as the City's preference for a bridge. While some research had been completed by the equestrian center regarding insurance coverage, the question of whether establishing public access through the site was not resolved. The equestrian center committed to conducting additional research on the matter, with the intention of holding another follow-up meeting (Attachment IV-8). To date, no additional information has been presented by the equestrian center about whether or how public access could be established, and staff have not met with its representatives since then.

### Recent Events

On or about May 1, 2019, staff received a complaint from two people who encountered a group of four equestrians riding down the Mill Race Path. The individuals also sent staff photos showing the equestrian group traveling along a section of the path that is immediately south of the Jasper Road Trailhead. That same day, staff contacted the owner of Pacific Equestrian Center by phone in order to share this information and request their assistance with educating the equestrian community about the current prohibition on riding at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. A follow-up email was sent on May 2, 2019 (Attachment IV-6).

On May 14, 2019, staff received a voicemail from a cyclist who complained about encountering several piles of horse manure while traveling along a section of the Mill Race Path that passes through Georgia Pacific Natural Area. The caller specifically questioned why horses were present despite Willamalane's prohibition on this activity in all of its parks and natural areas. Later that same day, the voicemail was forwarded to the owner of Pacific Equestrian Center via email, again with a request to assist with educating the equestrian community. The email from staff and the owner's reply are provided on Attachment IV-4.

After receiving this reply, staff decided it was prudent to begin documenting the extent of equestrian use occurring at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. Automatic cameras were placed at two specific locations along the trails noted above. Over the course of a month, at least a dozen instances of equestrians traveling along the trails were captured. This information was shared with the owner of Pacific Equestrian Center in a letter dated June 20, 2019 (Attachment V). The owner's response was received via email on June 21, 2019 (Attachments IV-1 through IV-2).

Multiple emails have been received by staff from other individuals who expressed frustration with the letter sent to Pacific Equestrian Center (Attachment VI). It is not clear from these emails whether a complete copy of the June 20<sup>th</sup> letter had been provided for their review. Staff are aware that a picture of the letter was posted to Pacific Equestrian Center's Facebook page without the associated attachments.

### Coordination with Agency Partners

On July 3, 2019, staff met with representatives from the City of Springfield and Springfield

Utility Board to discuss this matter in light of the events described above. No immediate solutions to the liability and regulatory issues identified above were reached; however, each agency expressed a willingness to continue working together to find a mutually acceptable way for allowing equestrian use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

I – Minutes from the June 14, 2017, Board of Directors Meeting

II – Aerial Photo Vicinity Map of Georgia Pacific Natural Area

III – October 20, 2017, letter to Pacific Equestrian Center

IV – Email correspondence with Pacific Equestrian Center

V – June 20, 2019, letter to Pacific Equestrian Center

VI – Email correspondence re: June 20, 2019, letter to Pacific Equestrian Center

**Board of Directors  
Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, June 14, 2017, 5:30 p.m.  
Bob Keefer Center for Sports and Recreation  
250 S. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Springfield, Oregon**

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**Call to Order**

President Greg James called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Roll Call**

President James, Vice President Ballew, Director Beyer, Director Ross were present. Director Bean was absent (excused).

**Flag Salute**

President James led the group in the flag salute.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

The certification of the May 16, 2017 special elections was added to the consent agenda.

**Oral Requests and Communications from the Audience/Staff**

Bernie Ogan, the owner of Pacific Equestrian Center, whose property borders the property on which the new bike paths were constructed in 2004. From the time the property where the Middle Fork path and Mill Race path were now, was owned by Georgia Pacific and equestrians had continual access and used this property. Since purchasing the property, the Pacific Equestrian Center and all their boarders, continued the use of their property on a regular basis. In 2011, Willamalane held two planning meetings to develop a path plan reflecting community needs, desires and expectations. Horse people from the community were present and asked that they be welcome as contributing members to the park plan. Since that time, there was little communication with Willamalane and never any major incidents. On June 9, 2017, Ms. Ogan received an email from the Willamalane Public Affairs official stating that horses were not allowed on the paths or trails. Ms. Ogan clarified that in 2014 she spoke with Bob Keefer, who asked Ms. Ogan to refrain from riding horses on the paved paths, but the trail area was acceptable. She noted the services that the Pacific Equestrian Center and her family provided to the community, including hosting classes through Willamalane where participants took rides on the property in question, and emphasized that the horses they worked with were chosen specifically for their great temperament, that safety was taken very seriously and that clients were taught tools to be great horsemen that could be used on the trails to avert potentially dangerous situations. She asked the board members to review Willamalane's mission statement

that applied to all park users; there were several other park systems that successfully melded environmental restoration, and pedestrian and biking activities with horse use.

Portia Pendleton was concerned about the consideration of a ban of horse riders on the trails. She and her daughter were horse owners and horse riding on the trails was invaluable for her daughter and wellbeing. She was deeply concerned and disheartened that new trails meant to support healthy outdoor activities would exclude a sport that had been in this area and had supported the trails for decades before the new trails were created. To her knowledge there had been no reports of horse related accidents in the last thirteen years. She provided Mt. Pisgah as an example of a trail system that successfully incorporated horse riding with hikers and runners. She had confidence a decision that supported the horse community needs as well as the other outdoor activities that the City of Springfield was trying to support.

Arissa Loft said the Pacific Equestrian Center was important to her. She boarded her horse there during school breaks and attended Pony Camp where a group of children do things with horses, including trail rides, for a week or five days. If the barn could not use the park, trail riding would not be a part of the camps activities. The trails provided necessary access to the outdoors and horse activities for children who lived in the city, or did not own their own horses.

Alisa Carrillo and her children had utilized both the trails and the Pacific Equestrian Center for some time. The experience was something that children did not get access to often and the other horse trails were further away and more difficult to access. Horse trails would be a great asset to the community. The horse community was large and to have that an opportunity to access horse trails in Springfield would help people decide whether to move into or partake in the Springfield economy. Children who were involved with horses were trained to be appropriate and safe at all times. She thought access to horses was important for children and she asked that the board reconsidered allowing horses on the trails. She urged them to look to trail systems such as Mt. Pisgah, where there had not been any issues in allowing horses on the trails, as examples.

Karen Higgins lived near and utilized the Clearwater trails. The new trails were placed where the existing horse trails were and she requested that horse riders had access to trails near the new trail system. She thought horse riding was a wonderful experience for children.

Illoria Painter moved to Springfield four years ago and began utilizing the Pacific Equestrian Center. She emphasized the therapeutic nature of horse riding and having access to the trails in Springfield was important, especially for those who did not have access to a horse trailer to haul their horses to horse trial systems outside of the city. If the use of the trails was allowed for equestrians, the large horse community would look after the trails and keep others from damaging the trails.

Cami Roach and her husband have utilized the trail system on horseback for many years. When riding on the trails she and her husband and other trail riding friends were courteous to hikers; they moved to the side of the trail to let them pass and were respectful to everyone's space. She mentioned that during rides on the trails they had come across homeless camps, and had found needles. She felt there was always going to be risks, but the horse community thoroughly trained their animals and prioritized safety. There were many trails dedicated to walkers, but there were not a lot of horse trails. Riding the trails had been a great experience and she wanted her children to be able to have the same experiences.

Marilee Durgien valued her experiences riding the trails; access to the trails allowed her to have these experiences, which she wouldn't have been able to have otherwise.

Lonna Born, a full-time riding instructor and trainer at the Pacific Equestrian Center, had been riding on the trails since she was ten years old. The Pacific Equestrian Center offered safe experiences with horses and introduced hundreds of youth to the trails behind the organization's barn in a safe manner. In past years, she partnered with Willamalane to offer horseback riding courses and day camps. Every student rode the trails. Some students had special needs and the trail rides provided them with safe experiences outdoors. These trails kept the horse community and nature lovers growing for over sixty years and she felt it was important to avoid shutting them out of the trail system.

Olivia Ogan, who was eleven years old, had ridden the trails for her entire life. She emphasized that through all her experiences riding horses on the trails, she had never upset any walkers, bikers or runners.

Dakota Braatz said horseback riding was important to her. Riding the trails was a great way to improve her confidence. These trails had given Dakota and her peers an opportunity to experience the outdoors, rather than sitting at home. She asked the board to allow horseback riders access to the trails

Marilee Brown and her granddaughters utilized the trails for horseback riding. It was great for children to have the experience to ride on the trails; not everyone had a horse trailer and the Clearwater trails provided ease of access to trail riding. In her experience on the trail, she and other riders were courteous to walkers. There was never an issue and the trails were shared between horseback riders and walkers. She emphasized the invaluable experiences that riding horses on the trail provided to children. She hoped that the board considered leaving trail access to horseback riders on at least some trails. She suggested offering an adopt-a-trail opportunity so that the trails with horse access were maintained and cleaned of horse waste on a regular basis.

Kyoko Eastman grew up in the area and had been riding the Clearwater trails since her childhood. She thought instead of eliminating access to horseback riders, she suggested adding a

bark-o-mulch trail alongside the paved trails, which horseback riders could access. There were other parks that allowed horses, dogs, walkers, and bikes and she could not find any reports of incidents. She hoped that the trails would be open for everyone.

Donald Cole, who was very involved in the horse community and past president of the Eugene Pony Club Association, had been riding horses in the Millrace, Clearwater and Dorris Ranch area since he was a child. He said the original trails were laid down by he and his siblings riding horses and cutting blackberry bushes throughout the land where the trails were now. He felt the decision made to eliminate trail access to horseback riders was done without a cost/benefit analysis. He said the Eugene Pony Club Association was the oldest non-profit organization in Lane County and he asked the board to consider this when making the decision on trail access for horseback riders. He was concerned with the decision to eliminate trail access to horseback riders and felt that it was a huge mistake. He thought Willamalane would miss out on a great community development opportunity if the trail access was denied to horseback riders. He emphasized that having horses was a lifestyle and this decision would alter many lifestyles. He added that horses had therapeutic values and provided an example of his nephew who was autistic and was unable to communicate until he began working with horses.

President James appreciated the feedback from citizens like Mr. Cole. The board members were elected to represent members the community and their input was greatly valued.

Sheila Juhns was a horse owner who lived on Clearwater Lane. She had not experienced any incidents while riding the trails on horseback. She mentioned the Willamalane planning meetings held in 2009/2010, in which she advocated for horseback rider access to the trails. At that time, the trails were open to all users. The elimination of access to horseback riders let down a part of the community.

Natalie Reeves thanked Willamalane for the services it provided to the community. She felt Willamalane had an opportunity to expand those services and involve the horse community. It was important for her to be in a community of riders the Pacific Equestrian Center provided that. The Pacific Equestrian Center also provided access to the trails, for which she and her children travelled from Eugene to access on horseback. She asked the board members to consider Willamalane's core values and the ways in which they could tie in to the horse community. There was a large portion of equestrians in the community who valued teamwork, community, accessibility, personal growth, partnership, innovation the environment, and excellence, all of which were core values of Willamalane.

Jaden Silver grew up attending the Pacific Equestrian Center's Pony Camps. She recalled childhood memories of riding the trails on horseback. She emphasized that horseback riding had therapeutic value and helped people through difficult times.



Rose Davalos Helvington a Springfield property and horse owner. Her children and family members benefitted from the trails. They enriched mental health wellbeing and the community. She emphasized that she and the community come together to raise the country's future leaders through recreation which develop of team building skills. Riding horses taught children to be respectful of the land and others as well as to value public safety. Taking the privileges of the trails away from equestrians would not only harm the children's opportunity for life lessons and experiences. Children were taught that sharing was caring, and adults needed to practice this and share the trails, as it had always been done.

Kathy Wooldridge valued riding the trails. She spoke of her lifelong love of and dedication to horses. She provided examples of cherished childhood memories with horses and spoke to the importance of providing children the opportunity to experience riding horses on the trail, rather than only being able to ride in an arena. She thought the new trail connections to Dorris Ranch and Mt. Pisgah would attract horseback riders from across the country and state. The horse community would help make the trails accommodating to horses, as the Mt. Pisgah trail system had.

President James thanked all the public speakers. He emphasized that this portion of the meeting was important to board members because community feedback made a difference.

## **Public Hearing**

### **Adopt FY 2018 Approved Budget**

#### **a. Staff Reports – Parent**

Staff reported that there were two questions that came out of the last budget meeting Director Ballew expressed some concern over the projection of personnel expenses over the five years and impact on budget. Informational documents regarding these topics were sent to the board members by email; staff asked if there were any questions regarding the documents.

In response, staff said they worked to see how to monitor and forecast in a way that would address that concern each time they came back to the board to report.

Staff suggested in addition to the quarterly financial statements, Budget vs expenses report would be provided in January

#### **b. Open Public Hearing, Request Audience Comments on Budgets**

##### **Close Public Hearing**

No public comment was offered.

#### **c. Board Discussion**

## **Consent Calendar**

## **Minutes**

Regular Board Meeting of May 10, 2017  
Budget Committee Meeting of May 31, 2017

### **Claims**

05/1/17 through 05/31/17 Disbursements for Approval  
Checks #110439 through #110710

### **Financial Report**

07/01/16 – 04/30/17

**Action:** Consider motion to approve the Consent Calendar, as presented

### **Resolutions**

Resolution #15-16-10 to Adopt FY 2017 Budget, Levy Taxes, and Make Appropriations

Director Beyer moved, seconded by Director Bellew, to approve the Consent Calendar, including the certification of the May 16, 2017 special elections. The motion passed unanimously 4:0.

President clarified that the FY 2018 COLA for Non-Bargaining Unit Employees and minimum wage increase was included under the consent calendar under resolution #15-16-10, #16-17-17, and #16-17-18.

Staff noted that as a matter of practice with that they then also planned to adjust it to all employees, as part of the organizational COLA increase. In addition, there was a mistake in the consent agenda; it should read *Resolution #15-16-19*.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **1. Thurston Hills Trail Contract**

Eric Wold requested that the board award a contract to Ptarmigan Ptrails LLC for the construction of the first phase of trails in the Thurston Hills area. There was a bid opening for this project on June 1, 2017 and received two proposals: Ptarmigan Ptrails \$237,000 and Oregon Woods at \$373, 000. Both bidders met the minimal qualifications and had complete submittals.

President James stated this was a minimum wage rate contract. He asked if staff assured that Ptarmigan Trails LLC offer included everything in the specifications.

Staff responded, stating that they did speak with Ptarmigan Trails LLC at a mandatory pre-bid meeting in which all elements of the project were thoroughly discussed.

Director Ross moved, seconded by Director Ballew, to authorize the Superintendent to finalize a contract with Ptarmigan Ptrails LLC for trail construction at the Thurston Hills Natural Area with an amount not to exceed \$237,647. The motion passed unanimously, 4:0.

### **2. Workers Compensation Insurance Renewal**

Nicole Gibson reported that July 1, 2017 was the renewal date for worker's compensation, and that Willamalane's MOD rating came in at .94, which was favorable. There was an adjustment on the quote received from Special Districts Insurance Services (SDIS) from \$110, 922.71 to

\$98,000. Corrected payroll number contributed to this adjustment. Actuals would be reported and there would be some reduced costs. Attachment A of the memo provided in the agenda packet showed that the three-year scenario examined indicated an expensive year came off and a less expensive year came on. The benefits were expected to be seen through the next couple years. SDIS did a phenomenal job handling claims. Bids would be accepted next year when Willamalane would be more competitive with their MOD rating. However, the agent of record currently recommended continuing to use SDIS for worker's compensation insurance. Staff recommended that the board award the workers' compensation insurance policy to Special Districts Insurance Services for the policy period from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

President James moved, seconded by Director Beyer, to award the workers' compensation insurance policy to Special Districts Insurance Services for the policy period from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018. The motion passed unanimously 4:0.

### **3. Superintendent's Evaluation Process**

Staff distributed a document stating the superintendent's evaluation process that had been used for the previous superintendent. Staff asked if the board wanted to continue using this process or if they would like to change the process. If the board wanted to continue with the previously used process, the forms would be emailed to the board members.

Staff responded, stating this was not an annual review, but rather an evaluation of the superintendent's six-month probationary period.

President James thought the form was a good way for the board members to contribute their thoughts on the superintendent's probationary period performance. He suggested that staff send the forms to the board members, which would then be forwarded to the Vice Chair to accumulate the data and move forward. A discussion about the evaluation result was planned for the next board meeting, during an executive session.

### **Business from Legal Counsel**

None

### **Standing and Special Committee Reports**

President James reported that Eugene was named the Gigabit City and LCOG was involved in the implementation of high-speed internet in the Eugene-Springfield area. Currently the fiber-optic high-speed internet had only been implemented in the downtown Eugene area. A wireless provider was examining the possibility of tying into the high-speed internet service and making it available outside of the downtown area. The contract had been negotiated with an outside internet provider, rather than Comcast and other local internet providers.

### **Superintendent's Business**

**1. Superintendent's report** – No report at this time

#### **2. Staff Updates**

The recruitment for the executive assistant went live on Monday. It was a three-week recruitment period. Staff emailed the timeline and process to the board members.

President James thought the recruitment was well put together.

Staff acknowledged Ronnie Price, who agreed to help take minutes for this meeting.

### **3. Upcoming Meetings/Work Sessions/Events**

- July 4 Light of Liberty Celebration, Island Park, 4 p.m.
- July 5 *The Big Time* Concert, Meadow Park, 6:30 p.m.
- July 6 SpringFilm: *Dead Man*, Wildish Community Theater, 6:30 p.m.
- July 7-8 “Ruffing It” Family Campout, 3 p.m.
- July 7 Movies in the Park: *Rogue One*, Ruff Park, 7:30 p.m.
- July 12 *Nate Botsford* Concert, Island Park, Jesse Maine Park, 6:30 p.m.
- July 12 Regular Board Meeting, Heron Room, 6:30 p.m.
- July 14 Dodge the Zombies (K-5 only), Bob Keefer Center Multi-purpose Courts 7:30 p.m.
- July 14 Movies in the Park: *Finding Dory*, Douglas Gardens Park, 7:30 p.m.
- July 19 *The Cheeseburgers* Concert, Island Park, 6:30 p.m.
- July 21 Movies in the Park: *While You Were Sleeping*, Royal Delle Park, 7:30 p.m.
- July 27 *3 Man Slam* Concert, Douglas Gardens Park, 6:30 p.m.
- July 28 Movies in the Park: *Ghostbusters*, TBD, 7:30 p.m.
- July 29 Children’s Celebration, Island Park, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

### **Written Communications**

Staff reported that written communication had been submitted about the equestrian use of the Clearwater and Millrace park trails, as well as billiards at the Adult Activity Center. There had been a significant decrease in the use of the pool tables at the Adult Activity center and in repurposing the Alder Room in which the tables were located, were planned to be used for fine arts, and event space. At least 150 more people would be provided services by repurposing this room. The advisory council supported this change. The patrons of the center were also being surveyed to gather their opinions on the use of the center and the loss of the pool tables.

### **Remarks from the Directors**

President James reminded the board that officers were elected in July. Director Ballew expressed her willingness to serve in the capacity as president next year. Director Bean was willing to and interested in serving as Vice Chair. A formal discussion and action item on the officer’s election was planned for the July board meeting.

### **Messages and Papers from the President**

A board member noted that he was impressed with the public comment about the equestrian trail access issue. He recommended that Willamalane find a way to make sure equestrian access was allowed on the trails.

Staff said that they met internally at an area of the site and some of the existing trails; the challenge faced was to be able to ensure that the use the soft surface trails did not spill over onto the paved tails. The board should keep in mind that the property was co-owned so the city would need to be included in the conversation. There were many restoration plans for the trials and the pond and previous conversations with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) included exploring the possibility of stocking the pond for fish so that fishing could take place there. Another challenge was that the Pacific Equestrian Center has private access to the trails, so Willamalane needed to formalize whatever agreement was made through a facility use agreement. A meeting was planned with the Pacific Equestrian Center and the equestrian

community for next week to discuss what a partnership would look like and how often the trails were being used.

President James believed that horseback riding was therapeutic and there was a lot of benefit. The large number of children who had issues that were addressed by these types of programs was impressive. He thought there were many benefits to figuring out a partnership with the equestrian community

Staff noted that trail expansion was a possibility in that area, but keeping the trails separated needed to be considered. Staff planned to continue gathering information and reach out to co-owners of the property. Staff planned to provide the board with a summary of their findings and recommendations.

### **Adjournment**

President James adjourned the meeting.

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Vincent Martorello, Secretary

*(Recorded by Emily Mathis, LCOG)*



Georgia Pacific Natural Area Trail System







Willamalane Center for Sports and Recreation | 250 S. 32nd St., Springfield OR 97478-6302  
541-736-4544 | [willamalane.org](http://willamalane.org)

October 20, 2017

Ms. Berni Ogan  
Pacific Equestrian Center  
3525 Garden Avenue  
Springfield, OR 97478

RE: Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area Trails

Dear Berni:

Thank you for taking time to meet with me and other Willamalane Park and Recreation District (WPRD) staff on September 19, 2017, to discuss equestrian use of the informal trails at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. As we discussed at the meeting, there are several factors that influence whether and to what extent horseback riding can be accommodated at this site. Since our meeting with you, we have been gathering information to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges we'll need to address in order to formally enable this use. Below is a summary of our research to date.

1. Property Ownership Factors – As was noted at our meeting, the portion of the Georgia Pacific Natural Area that contains the subject trails is co-owned by WPRD, the City of Springfield, and the Springfield Utility Board. We have reached out to both organizations for their perspectives on improving the trail system for equestrian use, and received the following responses.

The Springfield Utility Board has informed us of an adopted policy that prohibits private use of their properties. Public use is permitted, on a case-by-case basis, but must be reviewed and approved by their Board of Directors.

The City of Springfield is open to preparing a formal plan for allowing equestrian use of existing and new trails. However, City staff have requested that we consult with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the local Soil & Water Conservation Service (SWCS) office to determine whether mitigation will be necessary to address potential habitat and water quality impacts.

2. Land Use Regulations – The entire property is located outside of the Springfield Urban Growth Boundary, and subject to land use regulations adopted and enforced by Lane County. Requirements of the County's development code that are pertinent to improving trails for equestrian use include:

- a Special Use Permit for approval of a public recreation use in the Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) zone;
- a Floodplain Development Permit for approval of structures, grading or fill that will be constructed or placed within the regulatory 100-year Floodplain, which covers a majority of the property, including the existing trail crossing from your facility;
- a Willamette River Greenway Permit for approval of new development within the mapped Greenway, which covers the entire property and portions of your facility; and
- compliance with local and state regulations regarding development activities within wetlands and riparian areas, which affect key portions of the property, including the existing trail crossing from your facility.

Given these factors, it would be worthwhile for us to meet again very soon to discuss whether you're willing to allow public access to the trails from your facility. If public access is feasible, then we can proceed with scheduling a consultation with the ODA and SWCS. Design of trail improvements and formal expansion of the existing trails would follow based on their input and other regulatory considerations described above.

We look forward to talking with you as soon as possible. Please contact me before October 27, 2017, to schedule our next meeting. I can be reached by phone at (541) 736-4048, or by email at [eric.adams@willamalane.org](mailto:eric.adams@willamalane.org).

Best Regards,



Eric Adams  
Planning and Development Manager

Cc: Vincent Martorello, WPRD  
Simon Daws, WPRD  
Emily Ring, WPRD  
Kristina Koenig Boe, WPRD  
Fraser MacDonald, WPRD



**From:** [Berni Ogan](#)  
**To:** [Brett Parsons](#); [Eric Adams](#); [FERSCHWEILER Greg](#); [Fraser MacDonald](#); [Michael Wargo](#); [NELSON Jeff](#); [PASCHALL Jeff](#); [WASHBURN Sunny](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area  
**Date:** Friday, June 21, 2019 10:16:59 AM

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A second clarification. I will not change my website. I have a horse trailer and haul out to Elijah Bristow on occasion. Their property borders the Willamette river. I don't think your organization has the right to tell me what I can or cannot include on my website. Telling me what I can or cannot put on my business page is a serious over reach!

Berni

On Fri, Jun 21, 2019 at 9:32 AM Berni Ogan <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)> wrote:

Eric,

I am sorry to hear how confrontational you and your organization have become regarding this matter. My family pays over \$1500 per year to the Willamalane Park System. As a hard working, respectful tax payer this is how I am treated. It is a shame. You have not put into consideration how many lives our barn has positively impacted over the years. We are not the enemy. I personally have not been back there or taken any of my clients back there this year. There has been very little communication since we had meetings last year (because my business model does not depend on me taking clients on trail rides), but each time it has come from you in a hostile manner. Since the beginning of the concept of the Natural Area use behind our HOME, we participated in the community meetings (along with many other horse owners in the neighborhood) where we were assured horse use would be an integrated part of the system. There have been ZERO safety issues caused by us when we were continuously using the path. However, since the path was opened up to more of the general public, we have had trouble with continual trespassing and littering. I do not contact you in a hostile manner every time this occurs. People are free agents and make up their own minds as to what they will or will not do. I am not in control of the entire horse population of the greater Springfield Area just as you are not in control of all of the walkers, joggers, bikers and now vagrants that have inundated that area.

We tried to come up with working solutions, and have been shot down each time. We provided you with a large stack of well documented cases where equestrian use is integrated into areas also used by walkers, joggers and bikers. We have offered work parties to clear a small trail area that is away from what the general public usually uses. There are very few documented cases of Horse incidents in parks anywhere across the United States causing harm to bikers or pedestrians. In fact there is documented data that including equestrian use cuts down on some of the illegal or illicit behavior that happen in public areas. There are many well documented cases of bike versus pedestrian accidents, or accidents caused by dogs. Horse manure isn't even listed with the DEQ as a hazardous substance.

Pacific Equestrian Center has been an integral part of our community since well BEFORE Willamalane installed the paths on what is now considered the Georgia Pacific Natural Area. Since the 70's local equestrians have used the area back there RESPECTFULLY. In fact, for a while there was a Cross Country Course and Jumping Arena back there with permission from Georgia Pacific. We purchased our property 15 years ago. Since that time, I have occasionally gone back on the trails and enjoyed it with my family and my barn family. In the past, I have picked a couple of weeks of the year where I take lesson kids out regularly

**From:** [Berni Ogan](#)  
**To:** [Brett Parsons](#); [Eric Adams](#); [FERSCHWEILER Greg](#); [Fraser MacDonald](#); [Michael Wargo](#); [NELSON Jeff](#); [PASCHALL Jeff](#); [WASHBURN Sunny](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area  
**Date:** Friday, June 21, 2019 9:55:23 AM

---

One clarification, the \$1500.00 I pay to Willamalane is not by my choices. It is my personal property taxes directed to Willamalane.

Berni

On Fri, Jun 21, 2019 at 9:32 AM Berni Ogan <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)> wrote:

Eric,

I am sorry to hear how confrontational you and your organization have become regarding this matter. My family pays over \$1500 per year to the Willamalane Park System. As a hard working, respectful tax payer this is how I am treated. It is a shame. You have not put into consideration how many lives our barn has positively impacted over the years. We are not the enemy. I personally have not been back there or taken any of my clients back there this year. There has been very little communication since we had meetings last year (because my business model does not depend on me taking clients on trail rides), but each time it has come from you in a hostile manner. Since the beginning of the concept of the Natural Area use behind our HOME, we participated in the community meetings (along with many other horse owners in the neighborhood) where we were assured horse use would be an integrated part of the system. There have been ZERO safety issues caused by us when we were continuously using the path. However, since the path was opened up to more of the general public, we have had trouble with continual trespassing and littering. I do not contact you in a hostile manner every time this occurs. People are free agents and make up their own minds as to what they will or will not do. I am not in control of the entire horse population of the greater Springfield Area just as you are not in control of all of the walkers, joggers, bikers and now vagrants that have inundated that area.

We tried to come up with working solutions, and have been shot down each time. We provided you with a large stack of well documented cases where equestrian use is integrated into areas also used by walkers, joggers and bikers. We have offered work parties to clear a small trail area that is away from what the general public usually uses. There are very few documented cases of Horse incidents in parks anywhere across the United States causing harm to bikers or pedestrians. In fact there is documented data that including equestrian use cuts down on some of the illegal or illicit behavior that happen in public areas. There are many well documented cases of bike versus pedestrian accidents, or accidents caused by dogs. Horse manure isn't even listed with the DEQ as a hazardous substance.

Pacific Equestrian Center has been an integral part of our community since well BEFORE Willamalane installed the paths on what is now considered the Georgia Pacific Natural Area. Since the 70's local equestrians have used the area back there RESPECTFULLY. In fact, for a while there was a Cross Country Course and Jumping Arena back there with permission from Georgia Pacific. We purchased our property 15 years ago. Since that time, I have occasionally gone back on the trails and enjoyed it with my family and my barn family. In the past, I have picked a couple of weeks of the year where I take lesson kids out regularly on trail rides and have taken campers out once per camp to enjoy riding out of doors. However, I have not done that this year for reasons having nothing to do with your organization.

I am saddened that an organization such as yours, that claims to be community based chooses to exclude a certain part of your local population. A part that is more responsible than most.

Respectfully,

Berni Ogan

Mother

Taxpayer

Leader

Role Model

Law Abiding Citizen

.....who happens to own and operate a large privately owned, privately funded (with hard work, sweat, and tears) Equestrian Facility

541-912-9777

3525 Garden Avenue

Springfield, Oregon 97478

On Thu, Jun 20, 2019 at 4:12 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Ms. Ogan:

Please find attached a letter regarding ongoing equestrian use at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. As noted in the letter, Willamalane has recently documented consistent and regular entry of equestrians into the natural area from your property.

Should you have contact information for the other horse owners you've mentioned below who may be accessing the natural area, please forward that to me as soon as possible.

Thank you,

**Eric Adams**

Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Bob Keefer Center for Sports and Recreation

[250 S. 32<sup>nd</sup> St.](#), Springfield, OR 97478

Office: 541-736-4048

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cid:image001.png@01D49CFA.EF9BA8E0



**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 3:56 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area

I have not been back on that land since 2018. There are many horse owners other than us that border the land in question. I am sorry you are being bothered with complaints. I am dealing with other matters at our barn that are

more pressing at the moment which require my energy.

Respectfully,

Berni Ogan

On Tue, May 14, 2019 at 3:53 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni:

Attached is voicemail I received earlier today from someone who encountered more horse manure on the Mill Race Path near Georgia Pacific Natural Area.

Again, your assistance in addressing this matter is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

**Eric Adams**

Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

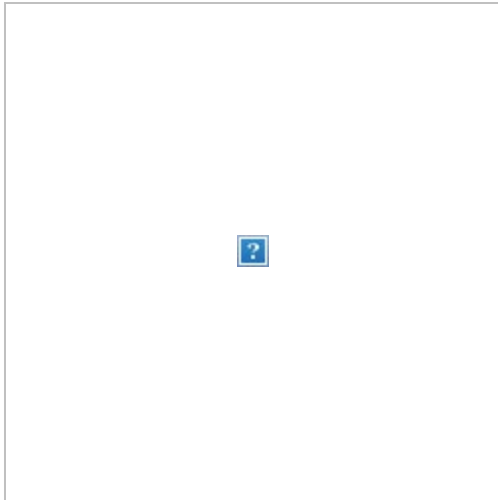
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Office: 541-736-4048

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---

**From:** Eric Adams

**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:00 AM

**To:** Berni Ogan <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area

Berni:

It was good to talk with you yesterday afternoon about the recent increase in equestrian activity that we've observed at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. I appreciate your willingness to modify language on the Pacific Equestrian Center website

(<https://pacificequestrian.net/equestrian-day-camps>) so it doesn't give the impression that horseback riding is permitted or condoned at Georgia Pacific Natural Area – at least for now.

I'm happy to return to our prior discussions about how to potentially accommodate equestrian use of the natural area. When we last spoke on this topic, the issues needing to be addressed were generally as follows.

- Public access to the natural area from the Pacific Equestrian Center
- Insurance and liability coverage that would indemnify the City of Springfield, Willamalane, and Springfield Utility Board
- Water quality impacts arising from horses crossing the Mill Race
- Land use permitting approvals from the City of Springfield and Lane County to formalize a trail system and related improvements

Each of these items still need to be resolved before authorized equestrian use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area can be established.

During our conversation yesterday, I mentioned that we'd received a complaint about horse manure that was recently left on the Mill Race Path. Later in the day, our Natural Resource Specialist was at the site attending to the droppings and encountered two people who noted having seen a group of equestrians riding along the path an hour or so before. The people evidently asked the group if they were allowed to be there, to which the riders supposedly replied that the "ranch owner" told them it was okay. A few hours later (about 5:45pm), our Natural Resources Specialist received a text from the same individuals, with the photos attached here. Although somewhat "grainy" these appear to show four relatively young women. I'm hoping you might know them, and, if so, would be willing to educate them about the current prohibition on horseback riding at Georgia Pacific Natural Area.

I look forward to hearing from you about scheduling a time for us to continue our conversation. In the meantime, we'll be closely monitoring Georgia Pacific Natural Area for equestrian use.

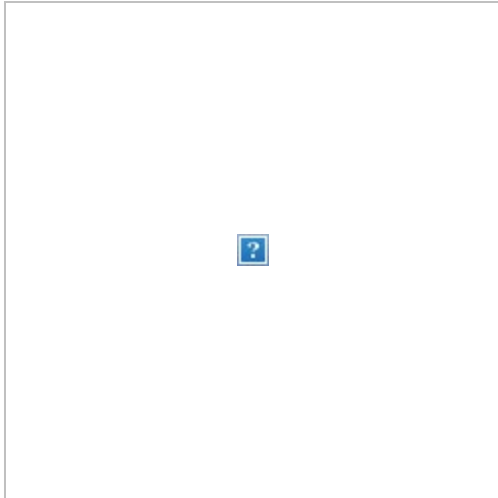
Best,

**Eric Adams**

Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Bob Keefer Center for Sports and Recreation  
[250 S. 32<sup>nd</sup> St.](#), Springfield, OR 97478  
Office: 541-736-4048  
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**From:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**To:** ["Berni Ogan"](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Riding trails  
**Date:** Monday, April 16, 2018 3:55:58 PM

---

Thanks, Berni. No apologies necessary; I can appreciate your frustration.

As I mentioned during our meeting, this is new territory for Willamalane and our partners, and we're hoping to find a solution that works for all of us, you and your family included.

After our meeting, I spoke with the Executive Director for Springfield Utility Board. I asked him to provide some further explanation of whether and why they appear to be considering the equestrian use in a different light when compared to other recreational uses that have been allowed to occur since we've owned the property. He hopes to get back to me within the next week.

I will also talk with Willamalane's legal counsel about whether "recreational immunity" would cover the City and SUB, and what extent of insurance coverage might be needed in the event it does not.

Please keep me posted regarding any information that James receives from your insurance company. Let's shoot for meeting again within the next three weeks to keep our discussion moving. Feel free to send me some potential dates/times that might work for you.

Best,

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478

Office: 541-736-4048

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**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Monday, April 16, 2018 2:32 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org>

**Subject:** Re: Riding trails

Eric,

Thank you for your time today. I really appreciate it. James is communicating with our insurance agent to get the information your organization needs from us.

I apologize for being short. As a business owner, and mother of 3 very active children I already have a lot on my plate. I was feeling extra overwhelmed with this hurdle that has been thrust in my path.

Thank you for continuing to have a dialogue with us as we tread through to find a resolution. Thank you for being patient with me.



Berni

On Tue, Apr 10, 2018 at 8:22 AM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Great – see you then.

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

[250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478](#)

[Office: 541-736-4048](#)

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**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 10, 2018 8:08 AM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Riding trails

10 am works on Monday. Thanks!

On Mon, Apr 9, 2018 at 2:26 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Thanks, Berni. During those times, we're currently available 10-10:30am on Monday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. Let me know if that will work with your schedule.

Best,

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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[Office: 541-736-4048](#)

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**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Monday, April 9, 2018 1:28 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Riding trails

Monday or Tuesday next week with a start time no later than 1pm

**From:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**To:** ["Berni Ogan"](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates  
**Date:** Monday, April 2, 2018 4:22:36 PM

---

Hi Berni,

Can you provide me with some dates/times that work well for you and your husband?

Thanks,

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 2, 2018 4:21 PM  
**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

Checking for new meeting possibilities.

Thanks! Berni

On Mon, Mar 19, 2018 at 8:32 AM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Okay – thank you.

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 19, 2018 8:27 AM  
**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>  
**Subject:** Re: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

I'll ask my husband. I hunk he has too busy a week. I'm thinking the following week will be

better.

On Mon, Mar 19, 2018 at 8:24 AM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni:

Checking again to see if this Tuesday at 1pm will work for you. Please let me know as soon as possible.

Thanks,

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

[250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478](#)

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---

**From:** Eric Adams

**Sent:** Friday, March 16, 2018 8:37 AM

**To:** 'Berni Ogan' <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** RE: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

Unfortunately, I have another meeting at 2pm.

How about 1pm on Tuesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>?

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

[250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478](#)

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---

**From:** Berni Ogan [<mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2018 5:35 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

I could do 2pm. My daughter has early release so I pick her up at 130

On Thu, Mar 15, 2018 at 5:32 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Okay. How about the day before, same time?

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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[Office: 541-736-4048](#)

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**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2018 5:30 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

Eric,

That day I will be in Albany with my daughter at a competition through Sunday.

Berni

On Thu, Mar 15, 2018 at 5:29 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni:

How does 1pm on March 22<sup>nd</sup> work for your schedule?

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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---

**From:** Eric Adams

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 4:52 PM

**To:** 'Berni Ogan' <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** RE: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

Thank you – I just wanted to make sure we were still following up on tasks from our previous meeting.

I'm still awaiting feedback from the City of Springfield regarding what measures would need to be put in place to protect water quality at the Mill Race crossing, and have sent

them a reminder given your email.

I'll check on schedules here, and get back to you with some dates/times as soon as possible.

Thanks,

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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[Office: 541-736-4048](#)

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**From:** Berni Ogan [<mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 4:32 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

It was a follow up from our last meeting, I was going to speak with my insurance company about using our parking lot as an access point for the trails for horses and I believe you were going to talk to the city of Springfield. Anyway Mondays are a good day, for me personally anytime before two is preferable most days because I have time scheduled work starting at four after I get my kids from school.

Berni

On Wed, Mar 14, 2018 at 4:28 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni:

Can you provide me with some potential meeting dates that work with your schedule, and also confirm the purpose of the meeting?

Thanks,

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

[250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478](#)

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**From:** Berni Ogan [<mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 14, 2018 3:14 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

Eric,

I'd like to set up another meeting Please.

Thanks!

Berni

On Sun, Dec 17, 2017 at 7:08 AM Berni Ogan <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)> wrote:

Eric,

Let's say Wednesday, December 27th at 3:30 pm please.

Berni

On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 3:40 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni:

Please see below.

Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> – any time after 10am

Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> – any time

Thank you,

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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-

**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Friday, December 15, 2017 3:15 PM

**To:** Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

My husband reminded me that i was supposed to get back to you just last night. Please send me additional dates that might work for you please.

-

Berni

-

On Fri, Dec 15, 2017 at 3:13 PM Eric Adams  
<[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni:

-  
I didn't receive a response from you about the potential meeting dates below. Please contact me as soon as possible with dates that would work for you.

-  
Until we are able to further discuss how to best accommodate equestrian activities, we appreciate Pacific Equestrian Center refraining from use of the Georgia Pacific Natural Area for this purpose.

-  
Thank you.

Eric Adams

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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Office: 541-736-4048

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-

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**From:** Eric Adams

---

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 29, 2017 3:52 PM

**To:** 'bernisilverogan@gmail.com' <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Georgia Pacific Natural Area -- Potential Meeting Dates

-  
Berni:

-  
Below are some dates in the next few weeks when our staff would be available to meet again to discuss continued equestrian use of the trails at Georgia Pacific Natural Area.

-

- [Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> 1-2pm](#)
- [Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, any time between 10-noon or 1-3pm](#)
- [Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, any time between 9-noon or 1-4pm](#)

-  
If none of these works for you, please let me know and I'll look farther out.

-  
Thanks,

Eric Adams

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

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**Bob Keefer Center  
for Sports and Recreation**  
250 S. 32nd St., Springfield OR 97478-6302  
**541-736-4544 • willamalane.org**

June 20, 2019

Ms. Berni Ogan  
Pacific Equestrian Center  
3525 Garden Avenue  
Springfield, OR 97478

RE: Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area Trails

Dear Ms. Ogan:

On May 2, 2019, I sent an email to you regarding ongoing equestrian use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area (attached). The intent of that correspondence was to follow-up with you regarding the status of conversations we've previously had about various regulatory and liability issues that must be resolved in order for equestrian use to be condoned in the natural area (see attached letter dated October 19, 2017). Your response to my email is also attached.

Over the last month or so, our staff have photographed no fewer than a dozen instances when horseback riders have been observed along an informal trail that has direct connection to the Mill Race crossing immediately adjacent to your property. Two of these instances include equestrians who were observed entering Georgia Pacific Natural Area from your property by crossing the Mill Race.

We have shared with you that the owners of Georgia Pacific Natural Area – Willamalane Park and Recreation District, City of Springfield, and Springfield Utility Board – currently prohibit this activity from occurring in the natural area, for reasons we've highlighted through prior correspondence with you. In light of the observations noted above, these agencies demand that you immediately cease and desist from allowing equestrian access to Georgia Pacific Natural Area from your property, until such time as all regulatory and liability issues have been satisfactorially resolved.

In the next few weeks, new signage will be installed at the crossing as well as near the parking area for the Mill Race Path's Jasper Road trailhead that makes it clear equestrian use is prohibited at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. In addition, we again respectfully request that information currently presented on your business website (<https://pacificquestrian.net/equestrian-day-camps>) be modified immediately to eliminate any indication that equestrian use is allowed at Georgia Pacific Natural Area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Adams', written in a cursive style.

Eric Adams  
Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Cc: Michael Wargo, WPRD  
Jeff Nelson, Springfield Utility Board  
Jesse Jones, City of Springfield  
Greg Ferschweiler, City of Springfield  
Sunny Washburn, City of Springfield  
Jeff Paschall, City of Springfield

Attachments

## Eric Adams

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**From:** Berni Ogan <bernisilverogan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 14, 2019 3:56 PM  
**To:** Eric Adams  
**Subject:** Re: Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area

I have not been back on that land since 2018. There are many horse owners other than us that border the land in question. I am sorry you are being bothered with complaints. I am dealing with other matters at our barn that are more pressing at the moment which require my energy.

Respectfully,

Berni Ogan

On Tue, May 14, 2019 at 3:53 PM Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni:

Attached is voicemail I received earlier today from someone who encountered more horse manure on the Mill Race Path near Georgia Pacific Natural Area.

Again, your assistance in addressing this matter is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

**Eric Adams**

Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Bob Keefer Center for Sports and Recreation  
[250 S. 32<sup>nd</sup> St.](#), Springfield, OR 97478  
Office: 541-736-4048  
[Willamalane.org](http://Willamalane.org)

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**From:** Eric Adams  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2019 9:00 AM  
**To:** Berni Ogan <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area

Berni:

It was good to talk with you yesterday afternoon about the recent increase in equestrian activity that we've observed at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. I appreciate your willingness to modify language on the Pacific Equestrian Center website (<https://pacificquestrian.net/equestrian-day-camps>) so it doesn't give the impression that horseback riding is permitted or condoned at Georgia Pacific Natural Area – at least for now.

I'm happy to return to our prior discussions about how to potentially accommodate equestrian use of the natural area. When we last spoke on this topic, the issues needing to be addressed were generally as follows.

- Public access to the natural area from the Pacific Equestrian Center
- Insurance and liability coverage that would indemnify the City of Springfield, Willamalane, and Springfield Utility Board
- Water quality impacts arising from horses crossing the Mill Race
- Land use permitting approvals from the City of Springfield and Lane County to formalize a trail system and related improvements

Each of these items still need to be resolved before authorized equestrian use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area can be established.

During our conversation yesterday, I mentioned that we'd received a complaint about horse manure that was recently left on the Mill Race Path. Later in the day, our Natural Resource Specialist was at the site attending to the droppings and encountered two people who noted having seen a group of equestrians riding along the path an hour or so before. The people evidently asked the group if they were allowed to be there, to which the riders supposedly replied that the "ranch owner" told them it was okay. A few hours later (about 5:45pm), our Natural Resources Specialist received a text from the same individuals, with the photos attached here. Although somewhat "grainy" these appear to show four relatively young women. I'm hoping you might know them, and, if so, would be willing to educate them about the current prohibition on horseback riding at Georgia Pacific Natural Area.

I look forward to hearing from you about scheduling a time for us to continue our conversation. In the meantime, we'll be closely monitoring Georgia Pacific Natural Area for equestrian use.

Best,

**Eric Adams**

Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Bob Keefer Center for Sports and Recreation  
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Office: 541-736-4048  
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541-736-4544 | [willamalane.org](http://willamalane.org)

October 20, 2017

Ms. Berni Ogan  
Pacific Equestrian Center  
3525 Garden Avenue  
Springfield, OR 97478

RE: Equestrian Use of Georgia Pacific Natural Area Trails

Dear Berni:

Thank you for taking time to meet with me and other Willamalane Park and Recreation District (WPRD) staff on September 19, 2017, to discuss equestrian use of the informal trails at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. As we discussed at the meeting, there are several factors that influence whether and to what extent horseback riding can be accommodated at this site. Since our meeting with you, we have been gathering information to gain a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges we'll need to address in order to formally enable this use. Below is a summary of our research to date.

1. Property Ownership Factors – As was noted at our meeting, the portion of the Georgia Pacific Natural Area that contains the subject trails is co-owned by WPRD, the City of Springfield, and the Springfield Utility Board. We have reached out to both organizations for their perspectives on improving the trail system for equestrian use, and received the following responses.

The Springfield Utility Board has informed us of an adopted policy that prohibits private use of their properties. Public use is permitted, on a case-by-case basis, but must be reviewed and approved by their Board of Directors.

The City of Springfield is open to preparing a formal plan for allowing equestrian use of existing and new trails. However, City staff have requested that we consult with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the local Soil & Water Conservation Service (SWCS) office to determine whether mitigation will be necessary to address potential habitat and water quality impacts.

2. Land Use Regulations – The entire property is located outside of the Springfield Urban Growth Boundary, and subject to land use regulations adopted and enforced by Lane County. Requirements of the County's development code that are pertinent to improving trails for equestrian use include:

- a Special Use Permit for approval of a public recreation use in the Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) zone;
- a Floodplain Development Permit for approval of structures, grading or fill that will be constructed or placed within the regulatory 100-year Floodplain, which covers a majority of the property, including the existing trail crossing from your facility;
- a Willamette River Greenway Permit for approval of new development within the mapped Greenway, which covers the entire property and portions of your facility; and
- compliance with local and state regulations regarding development activities within wetlands and riparian areas, which affect key portions of the property, including the existing trail crossing from your facility.

Given these factors, it would be worthwhile for us to meet again very soon to discuss whether you're willing to allow public access to the trails from your facility. If public access is feasible, then we can proceed with scheduling a consultation with the ODA and SWCS. Design of trail improvements and formal expansion of the existing trails would follow based on their input and other regulatory considerations described above.

We look forward to talking with you as soon as possible. Please contact me before October 27, 2017, to schedule our next meeting. I can be reached by phone at (541) 736-4048, or by email at [eric.adams@willamalane.org](mailto:eric.adams@willamalane.org).

Best Regards,



Eric Adams  
Planning and Development Manager

Cc: Vincent Martorello, WPRD  
Simon Daws, WPRD  
Emily Ring, WPRD  
Kristina Koenig Boe, WPRD  
Fraser MacDonald, WPRD

**From:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**To:** [Vincent Martorello](#)  
**Subject:** RE: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 5, 2017 11:34:41 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

---

Thanks. I've been wondering why she hadn't called me back...

**Eric Adams**

Planning and Development Manager

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478

Office: 541-736-4048

[willamalane.org](http://willamalane.org)

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Winner of the 2016 National Gold Medal Award  
for Excellence in the Field of Park & Recreation Management

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**From:** Vincent Martorello  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 5, 2017 11:22 AM  
**To:** Eric Adams <Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org>  
**Subject:** FW: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

FYI

*Vincent*

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

***Winner of the 2016 Gold Medal Award for Excellence in the Field of Park and Recreation Management***

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**From:** Vincent Martorello  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 5, 2017 11:21 AM  
**To:** 'Berni Ogan' <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

Hi Berni,

Eric Adams will take the lead on this for me. Eric's number is 736-4048.

*Vincent*



Willamalane Park and Recreation District

**Winner of the 2016 Gold Medal Award for Excellence in the Field of Park and Recreation Management**

**From:** Berni Ogan [<mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 5, 2017 10:47 AM

**To:** Vincent Martorello <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** RE: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

Vincent,

Who do I talk to about the trail planning? We played phone tag a few times and then I misplaced his number.

Thank you!

Berni

On Jul 24, 2017 8:53 AM, "Berni Ogan" <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)> wrote:

Great

On Jul 24, 2017 8:48 AM, "Vincent Martorello" <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Berni,

Thanks for the heads up about the camps. Our crews cleaned them out over the weekend.

**From:** Berni Ogan [<mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Friday, July 21, 2017 7:02 PM

**To:** Vincent Martorello <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** RE: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

Have a great weekend.

On Jul 21, 2017 6:59 PM, "Berni Ogan" <[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)> wrote:

This is what she said, "It's the new open area with the big trees broken and right before you get to the bike path."

On Jul 21, 2017 6:53 PM, "Vincent Martorello" <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Sounds good

**From:** Berni Ogan [<mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Friday, July 21, 2017 6:52 PM

**To:** Vincent Martorello <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** RE: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

Ok if I happen to get specifics to the location I'll forward it.

On Jul 21, 2017 6:50 PM, "Vincent Martorello" <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)>

wrote:

You caught me still working☺ - have a great weekend, I put in a request to park services just now to look for the camp tomorrow

**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Friday, July 21, 2017 6:49 PM

**To:** Vincent Martorello <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** RE: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

Wow! Fast response! Thank you!

On Jul 21, 2017 6:47 PM, "Vincent Martorello" <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Hello Berni,

Happy Friday. No worries. Kim Lyddane is our special event and outdoor recreation coordinator. She would be a the person to start talking to - her number is [541-736-4520](tel:541-736-4520). Thanks for the photo, I will have our folks head out their this weekend.

**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Friday, July 21, 2017 6:44 PM

**To:** Vincent Martorello <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** Re: June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

Vincent,

My husband and I are so crazy with summer activities right now, it may not be until the beginning of September that we can get together. I would, however, like the contact information of the two lovely ladies that were in our meeting about the possibility of coordinating some classes through Willamalane.

On another note, one of my boarders sent me these photos from back on your land today. I am not exactly sure where it is, I will get details.

Thanks!  
Berni

On Fri, Jul 7, 2017 at 5:13 PM, Vincent Martorello  
<[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Those were great pics, thank you for sharing. I have received some information from the City regarding the water protection conversation. I am waiting to hear from SUB about their thoughts on the equestrian use of the property. I will check in with them next week.

All this to say, I am still confident we will find a win-win outcome. Perhaps next week or the following we can schedule a meeting to check in and discuss any issue that may be present. Please let me know what dates and times you guys will be able to meet with me.

Thanks, and have a wonderful weekend.

Vincent

**From:** Berni Ogan [mailto:[bernisilverogan@gmail.com](mailto:bernisilverogan@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** Friday, June 30, 2017 8:37 AM

**To:** Vincent Martorello <[vincentm@willamalane.org](mailto:vincentm@willamalane.org)>

**Subject:** June Horse Camp, Pacific Equestrian Center

The contents of this e-mail may be confidential. If you are not the intended recipient of this e-mail, any access to, disclosure, copying or distribution of this information is prohibited and may be unlawful. If you received this e-mail in error please reply to the sender immediately to advise them of the error and then delete the e-mail and any attachments.

**From:** [Bekah Johnson](#)  
**To:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**Subject:** Horse activity near Willamalane trails in Spfld  
**Date:** Thursday, June 20, 2019 6:44:56 PM

---

Dear Mr. Adams,

Horses have been on these trails far longer than they have been “owned” by Willamalane. Horses are very low impact and should not be restricted. They help maintain natural trails. Horseback riding in the Springfield area also provide dozens of Springfield children and teens with a healthy outlet. As a representative of a youth agency, you should be promoting horseback riding not trying to ruin this experience for Springfield youth. I am very disappointed to hear that you and Willamalane are attempting to prevent horseback riding on trails. I certainly will not be promoting Willamalane as a staple of our community until this issue is resolved.

Sincerely, Rebekah Rodabaugh

**From:** [nic cole](#)  
**To:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**Subject:** trail riding on willamalane land  
**Date:** Thursday, June 20, 2019 7:45:29 PM

---

Hello, I am Nic C. An incoming 7th grader at Briggs middle school. I ride at Pacific equestrian Center, and have been for more than five years. I value the opportunity I have had since I started riding there. What is that opportunity? It is the ability to take a trail ride, which sounds simple. It is, but it is super fun! It is so calming and enjoyable, it gives you a time to just focus on your horse and your thoughts. You should try it! It's fun! I'm sure if you did, then you wouldn't want to take it away from us. I have a question, isn't one of Willamalane's goals to get people to enjoy themselves? I might be wrong I'm not sure, I searched it on your website, but it said "not found". But don't the people of Springfield pay taxes to your government funded organization? I hope you make the decision to keep letting us use the woods for trail rides. Since there has never been a problem with the pedestrians and horses. I would hope you would be inclusive to the population of people who ride horses. As excluding us seems unreasonable and unkind. Sharing is caring, and is there a reason why we can't share what Mother Nature has provided? Thank you for reading this email, hope you invite P.E.C. back to ride on the Willamalane trails.

Warmest regards and hopfulest thoughts,  
Nic

**From:** [doris hoitt](#)  
**To:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**Subject:** PEC  
**Date:** Friday, June 21, 2019 10:40:37 AM

---



Eric Adams,

Choosing to go after the folks at PEC for what is done by other individuals is wrong --- and you know it. Berni and her staff can't be held responsible for actions taken by the 'free agents' that rent stalls from her.

Pacific Equestrian Center has been a positive, responsible, integral part of the community in Springfield since, I think, before that area was 'in' the city limits.

I know times change, boundaries change, feelings change but this facility does a job even the school system fails to do. There is an old adage 'what's good for the inside of a young person is the outside of a horse' --- PEC proves this. I have been a horse-woman forever and a 4-H leader since 1981. Berni has participated in this program and others and the youngsters that come to her facility learn values, responsibility and even manners. BUT Berni isn't a police officer or a guard. Expecting her to do what you seem to wish is ridiculous.



I have a facility here on Hills Creek Rd. in Jasper. I control what happens on MY land and in MY building. Once they leave here I no longer have control. Get real!!

Sincerely, , , Doris J. Keith-Hoitt

Wife, mother, advocate for youth, 4-H leader, past sec. of Lane County Horseman's association, Co-founder of Pacific Wild Horse Club, Founder of Horse, Animal and Livestock Association of Lane County ect. And a whole bunch of other stuff!!!

**From:** [katie judson](#)  
**To:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**Subject:** One mile loop behind the stables  
**Date:** Friday, June 21, 2019 1:38:28 AM

---

Hello, you have more then likely gotten a lot of emails about this subject but closing off the trails behind the stables not only affect I but everyone else at the stables. We all use those trails after camps and daily. We not only report what we find on the trails to Willamalane, but we clean up after ourselves and others. We also pay taxes to use the parks. Please reconsider allowing equestrians to use the trails behind the stables. Thank you.

**From:** [Raelynn Mason](#)  
**To:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**Subject:** Equestrian Use  
**Date:** Friday, June 21, 2019 11:52:05 AM

---

I would like to email on behalf of the equestrian community of Springfield and Pacific Equestrian Center. If you are demanding that all equestrian activities stop, due to “liability issues” and “various regulatory violations” perhaps you should advise all the hikers, bikers, joggers, and dog walkers as well. Maybe your time would be better spent targeting another group? How about the non-tax paying citizens such as the homeless, who camp, litter, and destroy the area. My daughter is an equestrian and I know how important it is to have this accessible to our community. You are unfairly targeting a group of people who probably are one of the more respectful groups to use the land. Please refocus your efforts and time on actual issues that are having a negative affect on this area so that everyone can enjoy!

Sincerely,

Raelynn Mason -another hardworking, tax paying citizen of Springfield, Oregon  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [heidi good](#)  
**To:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**Subject:** Access to lands for equestrian use.  
**Date:** Friday, June 21, 2019 10:19:35 AM

---

Eric/Willamalane,

Please work with horse owners to ensure that there are places to ride that have traditionally been utilized by horse riders. Access to public lands have increasingly been taken away and along with it the ability to enjoy horseback riding. We pay taxes, and we should be able to enjoy the trails as much as everybody else. Please help, it is a way of life that horse owners are struggling to enjoy, and there is a magic and wonder in being in nature on horseback. I am so disappointed in the way Parks and Recreation in Springfield has been limiting our areas to ride horses. We can only hope people respect signage where no trespassing has been instituted, but do not label equestrians as the primary lawbreakers in this matter.

resident/Equestrian

sincerely, Heidi Good/Springfield

**From:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**To:** [Talartha Parkins](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Equestrians Allowed on Trail  
**Date:** Sunday, June 23, 2019 8:48:41 PM

---

Thank you for providing these additional comments, Ms. Parkins.

Liability is but one aspect of the current prohibition on equestrian use at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. The additional reasons are described in the letters we've previously sent to Ms. Ogan. In addition to these letters, we have also met with Ms. Ogan at least twice to discuss ways to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions.

As was stated in recent correspondence I sent to Ms. Ogan, we look forward to continuing those discussions about how to provide public access for equestrian use at Georgia Pacific Natural Area. By "public", we mean anyone who may wish to ride there, not only the customers of PCE.

Until then, Willamalane's park use ordinance prohibits this activity — not just at Georgia Pacific Natural Area, but in all of our parks — and that has been the case since Willamalane became an owner of this property. That is also true for rules prohibiting illegal drug use, illegal camping, and off-leash dogs, which are also enforced when our staff encounter these activities. In addition to complaints about these activities, we also receive complaints about equestrians traveling on the paved multi-use paths that extend through Georgia Pacific Natural Area and about manure being left behind on several occasions, presumably by these same riders. These were mostly recently brought to Ms. Ogan's attention in May, with the hope that she and PCE might be able to educate the equestrian community about how to limit their perceived presence within the natural area. Ms. Ogan made it clear she was not interested in providing that assistance.

Best,

**Eric Adams**

Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

[250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478](#)

Office: [541-736-4048](tel:541-736-4048)

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cid:image001.png@01D21FB5.EC0F8F30



On Jun 23, 2019, at 2:28 PM, Talartha Parkins <[tatortot2403@icloud.com](mailto:tatortot2403@icloud.com)> wrote:

I have seen all the information and reasoning on the PEC page because Berni is

like a mom to me. She has done so much and I feel that your reasons sound like it is a liability. Assuming I am correct on that assumption I would just like to say that the homeless population and people that set up and get drunk and do drugs are far more of a liability. I have gone back there and when going I have had to canter on the trail because there was someone doing drugs in a tent. I know someone that was chased threatening to harm them, seen garbage all over, and sooooo much more. If you want to fix something about the trail to enhance safety and lessen risk I would personally start with that. Find a way to keep them out. I have been in the creek, not even the trail and had loose dogs run to the edge of the water barking and scare my horse. I would like to see some evidence of complaints. Do these include pictures? Can you prove that we have done something wrong? Even if we are not aloud to be on the trail just temporarily, this is going to cause way more havoc for you too tell us we are not aloud on the trail. There are people at my barn that only ride on the trail, what are they supposed to do? Is their horse supposed to just sit in a stall and not get ridden? Are they supposed to just not ride? Most of the people at my barn would agree that riding is our life! Riding is what makes us feel free! There are people that do not even come to our barn that are furious about this decision you have made. You say you want to include everyone in the ability to be in nature and enhance them to be their own. No this is not exact wording however, it is still the basic information. Just to end this the needles and homeless camps do not enrich anyone. Thank you for taking the time to see my point of view but I guarantee that you have other emails to reply too.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 23, 2019, at 3:38 PM, Eric Adams <[Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org](mailto:Eric.ADAMS@willamalane.org)> wrote:

Ms. Parkins:

Thank you for taking time to share your thoughts. I assume your message below is in response to the letter that was delivered to Ms. Berni Ogan on Thursday. If you have not received a complete copy (the version posted to PCE's Facebook page doesn't include several attachments with prior correspondence that document Willamalane's efforts to work collaboratively with PCE to allow public access for equestrians), I would be happy to provide one to you for reference. It offers details about this situation about which you might not be aware. Please let me know if you'd like me to mail a copy to you, and, if so, please provide your mailing address.

I also would be glad to speak with you about your concerns and provide a complete explanation and background for why Willamalane and our partner owners are not currently able to allow equestrian use at Georgia Pacific Natural Area at this time. It is our position that equestrian access could be allowed once the challenges we've discussed with PCE have been solved. We are not attempting to impose an outright and permanent ban.

Please feel free to contact me to schedule a meeting or phone call at your convenience.

Best,

**Eric Adams**

Planning, Parks & Facilities Director

Willamalane Park and Recreation District

[250 S. 32nd St. Springfield, OR 97478](#)

Office: [541-736-4048](tel:541-736-4048)

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cid:image001.png@01D21FB5.EC0F8F30



On Jun 23, 2019, at 11:01 AM, Talartha Parkins  
<[tatortot2403@icloud.com](mailto:tatortot2403@icloud.com)> wrote:

Eric,

My name is Talartha Parkins, and I would like to address the problem with equestrians on the trail. I have ridden at Pacific Equestrian Center for over 6 years, and owned my horse there for over 2 of those years. My friends and I love to go out on the trail to relax and give our horses a break from the normal every day ride and schooling (teaching them/making sure they are doing what they are supposed to). We like to go out there especially during summer when it is too hot to ride in the arena. We like to go down and swim in the creek then have a relaxing ride on the trail, let them dry off, and swim again. This barn and experience has changed my life forever! Many people that don't get to ride often come out just to ride on the trails with someone. People have been riding on that trail since the 70's with no problem, yet the bike, dog and pedestrian accidents have been. Do you plan on banning them? If I'm being honest there should be signs that say horse crossing, so that the others are aware. Most of the equestrians that ride on the trail know their horse well and won't take them out if they think it will cause an accident. When that path was build it cut right in the middle of our trail which gives us another option of where to ride. Look at all the other trails and you will



see that even they allow horses. For example Elijah Bristow, cascades, Pacific Crest, and Buford. We should not have to trailer our horses in the hot to Florence, Oakridge, or any other place to ride on a trail. We have it in our backyard, so please answer me this, Do you not like, or are afraid of horses? Also what if someone told you that you could take your dog on a walk in a trail that you have used for several years? Please I would love to hear your responses because it is infuriating that you won't let us.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**To:** [Eric Adams](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Equestrian use of Clearwater Park-a Board Directive  
**Date:** Saturday, June 29, 2019 7:59:41 AM

---

From: "Terri Fackrell" <[tfackrell@gmail.com](mailto:tfackrell@gmail.com)>  
Date: Wed, Jun 26, 2019 at 8:12 PM -0700  
Subject: Equestrian use of Clearwater Park-a Board Directive  
To: "BOARD OF DIRECTORS" <[boardofdirectors@willamalane.org](mailto:boardofdirectors@willamalane.org)>

Dear President Bean and Board Members,

I am extremely disappointed in the management of Willamalane. The high turnover of leadership at Willamalane has led the team to lose agency knowledge and history. In particular related to the use of the Clearwater Park trail system by equestrians.

At the June 14, 2017 board meeting after an extensive public comment by over 20 citizens, the board directed the WPRD executive team to develop an agreement for equestrian use with the Pacific Equestrian Center. In fact " A board member noted that he was impressed with the public comment about the equestrian trail access issue. He recommended that Willamalane find a way to make sure equestrian access was allowed on the trails. " "President James believed that horseback riding was therapeutic and there was a lot of benefit. The large number of children who had issues that were addressed by these types of programs was impressive. He thought there were many benefits to figuring out a partnership with the equestrian community."

Now, on June 20, 2019, Pacific Equestrian Center has received a letter from Eric Adams, Planning Director, requiring the Center to disallow equestrians from accessing the Clearwater Park/Georgia Pacific Natural Area from the Center's property. Willamalane stopped communicating with Pacific Equestrian Center in October 2018 so the owner, Berni Ogan believe the conversation was resolved. Until an email in May and this formal letter from Willamalane.

The executive leadership team is not following the directions provided by the board of directors to develop a partnership with the equestrian community. In fact, the Willamalane executive leadership team is backing out of a good faith effort that Bob Keefer started with the Pacific Equestrian Center prior to his retirement. Mr. Keefer entered into a tentative agreement and discussion with the Center.

Two actions need to be directed by the Willamalane Board of Directors

1. Direct the current WPRD executive team to ensure an equestrian use agreement be finalized with Pacific Equestrian Center for the Clearwater Park/Georgia Pacific Natural Area per the original direction of the Board of Directors.
2. Direct the current WPRD executive team to ensure an equestrian use policy be finalized for the Clearwater Park/Georgia Pacific Natural Area per the original direction of the Board of Directors to ensure equestrian access to the trail. Pacific Equestrian Center is not the only

equestrian users of the park. The general equestrian public is users of the park.

It is the Boards responsibility to represent the voices

With best regards,

Terri Fackrell  
Springfield Resident

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